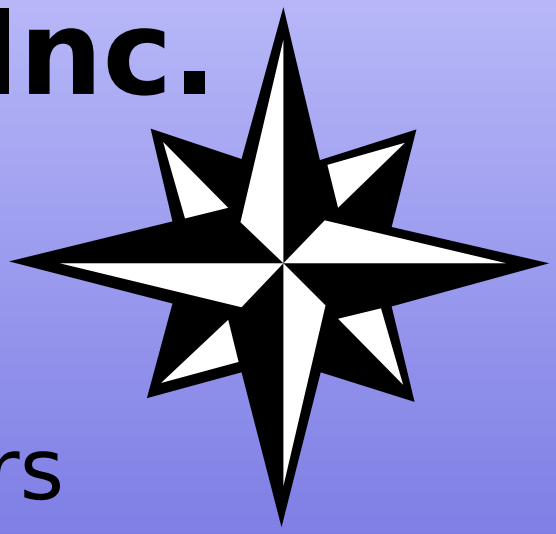
The Red Bead Experiment

Dr. W. Edwards Deming

Presented by: BILL VIGNOE, USAAVNC, ED, S&FDB

Crystal Bead Inc.



- Foreman
- 6 willing workers
- 2 inspectors
- 1 chief inspector
- Recorder

Apprenticeship

- Training
- Ask questions
- We make crystal beads
- 50 per person per shift
- 44 degrees
- 8 centimeters
- Our procedures are rigid

Day 1

- You have had excellent training
- 3 bead quota
- Merit raise for good performers
- Probation for poor performers
- Procedures are rigid
- There should be no variation

Day 2

- “Zero defect day”
- “Quality is your responsibility”
- “If it’s red your dead”
- “Customer appreciation day”

Day 3

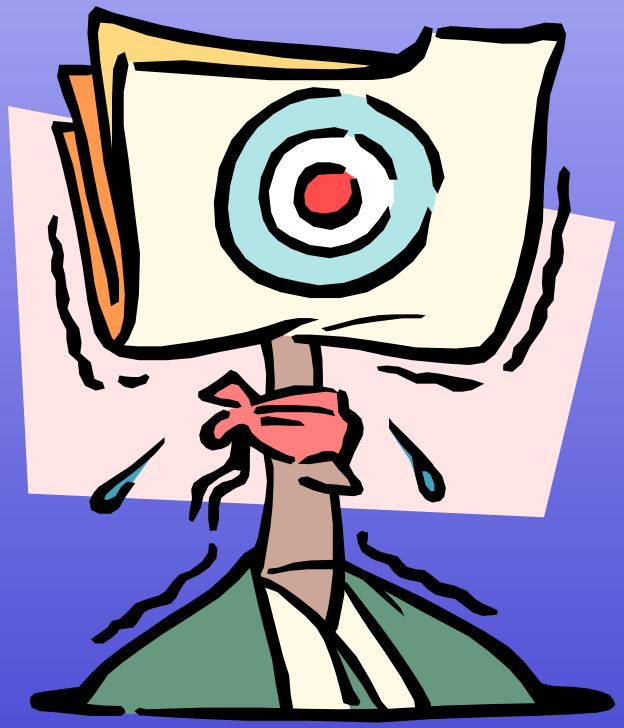
- $500.00 bonus for 3 or less

Day 4

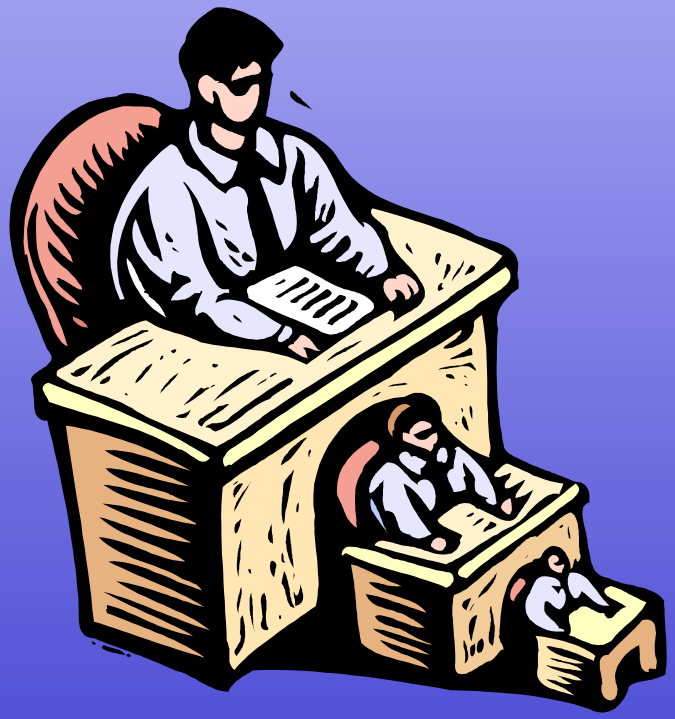
- Costs are too high.
- Our customers are complaining.
- We may go out of business.
- “Remember, your job performance is entirely up to you.”

Day 5

- Double shift
- 3 best workers



Close Shop



Lessons Learned

- Variation in the number of red beads resulted from a system created by management
- Blaming and firing the workers does not improve the system

Lessons Learned

- Management is responsible for changing the system so that workers can meet customer defined needs
- A role of the leaders is to make it possible for people to identify and remove red beads in the organization

Questions

- What do the red beads represent?
- What about the process?
- Why didn’t the workers improve?
- Internal/external evaluation
- Accreditation
- Unit training
- The schoolhouse

Thank you for your participation.

Now lets take a break.